

**National Guard Association of Connecticut**  
**360 Broad Street**  
**Hartford, CT. 06105-3795**

Testimony to the Veterans Affairs Committee  
February 19, 2009

Good morning to all the members of the Veterans affairs Committee. I am Dennis Oparowski an Army Veteran and a 2003 Operation Iraqi Freedom Veteran. I still serve today with the Connecticut National Guard and I am also the Co-Legislative chair of (NGACT) The National Guard Association of Connecticut representing all of our members on...

**Raised Bill 862 – An act concerning members of the National Guard called to State Active Duty.**

**Raised Bill 6408 – An act concerning professional liability insurance policies and members of the CT National Guard called to active duty.**

**SB 860 False representation of military status**

**SB 861 Retirement from military service**

**SB 863 Emergency management assistance compact**

**HB 6409 an act concerning Military Families**

**Bill 862 - The State depends on dual status military members as first responders to emergencies in our state. The explanation of a dual status technician is this. They are a civil service technician that must be a National Guard member and they must wear the uniform of the branch they serve in. They are the soldiers and airmen you see everyday through out the state. The State also depends on traditional Guard members (the one weekend a month and two weeks out of the year people) that can be immediately contacted also to respond. When this happens, whatever job or status they were in is suspended. They now assume the daily military pay of the rank they are wearing. In very few cases it is more but in others it is less than their current paycheck. This bill if passed will not solve the whole problem, but it will help balance the scales a bit.**

**An example is the rank of a specialist or corporal, commonly called an E-4. An enlisted individual with six years of service who's daily paycheck if activated is approximately \$74.00 a day. This does not include the daily benefits of an active duty soldier, just what is known as basic pay. The local auto garage down the street charges \$90.00 an hour for service. Call for service on anything in your house and you will pay at least a \$60.00 service call that usually doesn't come with any service. For the soldier, that's \$9.25 an hour, not bad except the day is based on 24 hours not eight. Now when you are activated, plan on at least a twelve hour working day and twelve hours stuck somewhere away from your nice warm bed, hence the 24 hour part, if you catch my drift? So at the twelve hours of work a day mark, that equals about \$6.16 without the four hours of overtime pay. That's less than our minimum wage in this State. When you multiply that dollar figure out for a week or so, some bill at the end of the month has a good chance of not getting paid. Like I said the \$125.00 a day does not solve the entire problem. At this rate it just about equals the daily pay of an active duty specialist (E-4) in the active military that receives the extra incentives like housing and food and so on.**

**The State of the State is marginal at best we all know that, but the least we can do is when we make the call and activate a Guard member to State active duty we at least guarantee that we pay them a living wage.**

**Bill 6408 On Professional Liability – This bill is pretty straight forward. If you have professional liability insurance and you are called to active duty for a long period on time such as our two current wars, it is requesting that the members insurance be suspended until relieved from active duty. The rest of the proposed bill explains the procedure to accomplish this. This goes along the same line as having your automobile put into storage and your insurance suspended while called to war.**

**SB 860 - The False Representation of Military Status - Raised Bill 861 An Act Concerning Retirement From Military Service – and Raised Bill 6409 An Act Concerning Military Families, are three bills before you today requiring some additions and clarification within the wording of these bills already established. They are clear and concise and after you read them I hope you will pass these amendments to them.**

**Raised Bill 863 An Act Concerning The Emergency Management Assistance Compact – I will concede that this is one of the longer bills to comprehend, and there better people here that will explain the concept to you so I implore you to listen to their explanation. I will say this... it does allow all the States, and territories that decide to participate in this compact the opportunity to share mutual assistance between them during emergencies as declared by the Governor of the state or territory in distress. There have been some recent set-backs in recent disasters with getting help to States and people in need in a timely manner under the present configuration and this Bill if passed should help elevate those situations.**

**I want to thank you once more for listening to my testimony and would gladly answer any questions to the best of my ability.**

**Respectfully**

**Dennis Oparowski  
NGACT**